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TORONTO.

# PASTORAL LETTER

— OF —

His Grace the Archbishop of Toronto

— TO THE —

Clergy, Religious Communities and Laity

— OF THE —

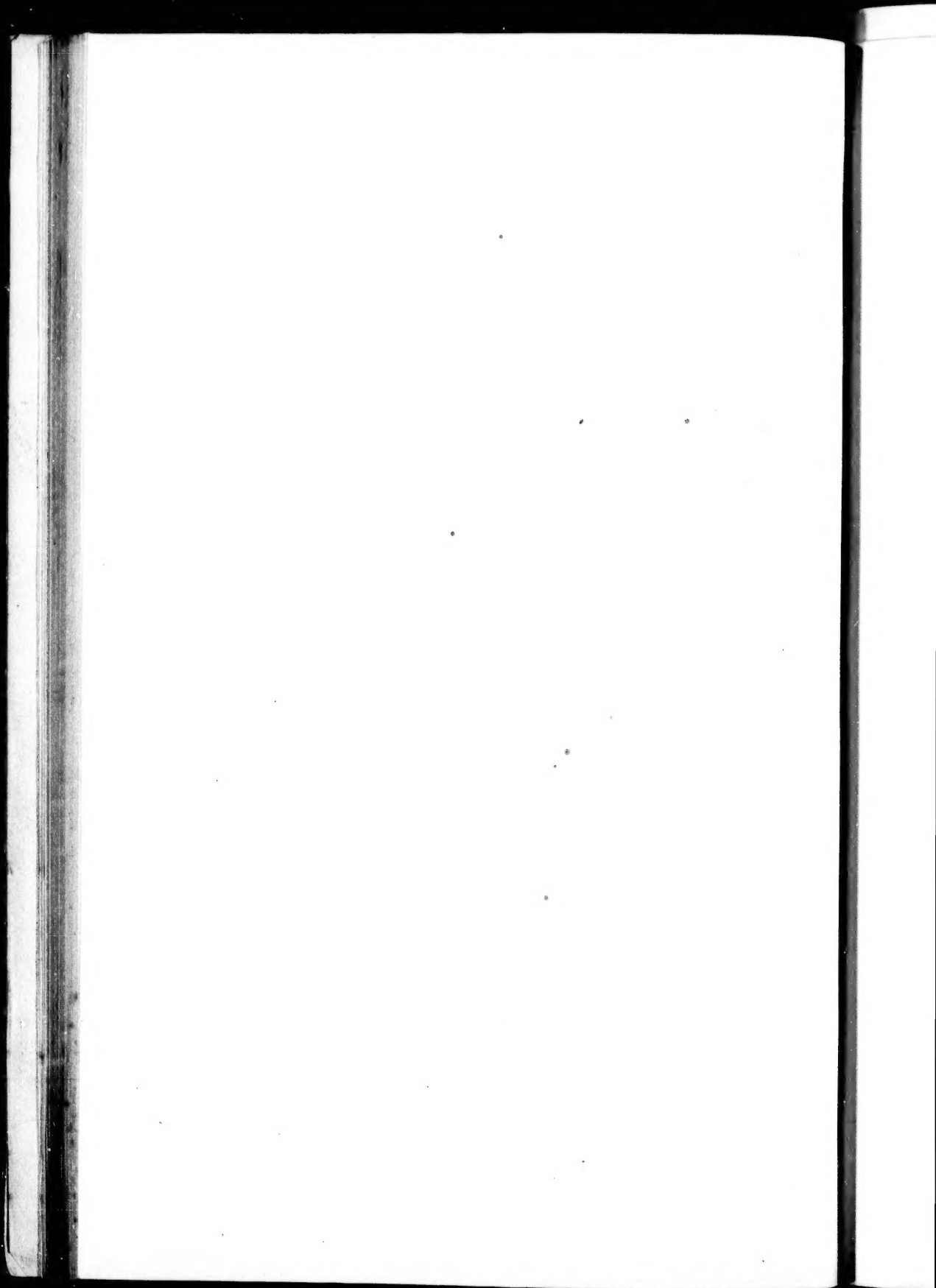
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TORONTO

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1896.



# PASTORAL LETTER

— OF —

His Grace the Archbishop of Toronto.

JOHN WALSH, BY THE GRACE OF GOD AND THE APPOINTMENT OF THE HOLY SEE, ARCHBISHOP OF TORONTO.

*To the Clergy, Religious Communities and Laity of the Archdiocese, Grace and Benediction in the Lord.*

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN :

By these presents we beg to remind you of the sacred duty that devolves upon us as children of the Catholic Church to contribute of our means and in accordance with our capacity towards the support and maintenance of our Holy Father the Pope, and to uphold him in the discharge of the sublime but arduous duties of his august office by our prayers, our sympathy and loyal devotion. The Vicar of Christ has been robbed of his independence and liberty as head of the Church ; he has been deprived of his civil principedom secured to him for centuries by the action of Divine Providence ; and he has been made dependent on the contributions of the faithful for the means that are necessary to enable him to exercise his divine and world-wide ministry. Under these circumstances it becomes an imperative duty for Catholics to rally around our Holy Father, to stand by and uphold him by loving loyalty and devotion, and to contribute of their means towards his congruous support and maintenance.

It is now eight years since the Archdiocese contributed anything towards this sacred cause. We have thus far delayed calling on our faithful people for this purpose, because of the many demands made upon them for the

diocesan works of religion and charity. But conscience, duty and honor require that we shall delay no longer. It is enough for us to know that our Holy Father urgently needs our aid, and that it is our bounden duty to give it generously and heartily. The Pope is the central figure and chief Pontiff in the Hierarchy of the Spiritual Kingdom which Jesus Christ has established on earth. He is the Vicegerent of the Son of God, the supreme visible head of the Church of Christ, and the infallible teacher of God's revelation to mankind. Hence it is that the children of the Holy Catholic Church regard him with deep reverence and filial love ; that they look to him for light and guidance in this world of doubt and darkness ; and that they are prepared to make the greatest sacrifices in order to uphold him in the discharge of his sublime duties, and in his warfare against the enemies of Christ and His Church, and of the best interests of humanity.

#### THE SUPREMACY OF THE POPE.

The supremacy of the Roman Pontiff over the Catholic Church, in all that relates to faith and morals and jurisdiction, is an article of faith and a fundamental doctrine of our holy religion. What the sun is to the solar system, that the Sovereign Pontiff is to the Catholic system of belief. The Papacy is the rock on which the superstructure of Christ's Church rises in all the grandeur of its imposing majesty, and in all the grace and beauty and harmony of its heavenly architecture. It is the unshaken foundation on which the Church securely reposes, proof against the tempest's shock and the upheavings of the earthquake. The Church of Christ is the kingdom of God on earth ; it must therefore have a ruler. Every well regulated society must possess a Chief Magistrate to preserve it in law and order. Take him away and you reduce society to anarchy and chaos. We see this fact too well illustrated in the religious denominations that have adopted the radical principle of private judgment.

They are split up into discordant fragments and jarring sects by the very force and action of the disintegrating and destructive principle which forms the shifting and sandy foundation on which they have sought to build.

The Church of Christ is a visible body ; it must have a visible head. It is a sheepfold ; it must have a supreme shepherd to guard the sheep and the lambs of Christ's flock. In other words, the visible Church of Christ must have a visible ruler to act as Christ's Viceregent, and to govern the Church in His name and by His authority until His second coming.

Even in the Jewish Church there was the office of the High Priest, who acted as God's Viceregent, and was supreme ruler in spirituals. Now, the Jewish Church was but the shadow of the Christian Church ; the latter, the reality and the completion of the former, just as the many-turreted cathedral, with all its beauties and glories, is but the realization and completion of the grand inspired design sketched by the artist on his parchment. It follows, therefore, that in the Christian Church there must be an office answering to that of the High Priest in the old dispensation, and at the same time excelling it, as the new is the better and more perfect dispensation. Now, that office is evidently none other than that of the Sovereign Pontiff, the supreme visible head of the Catholic Church. In fact, even apart from the divine promises and appointment, we find in holy writ various indications of the primacy and supremacy of St. Peter. In many pages of the New Testament Peter is always named *before* the other Apostles—" *The first*, Simon, who is called Peter," says St. Matthew x. 2. He is the first that confessed his faith in the divinity of Christ, the first in the manifestation of love, the first of the Apostles who saw the risen Saviour, the first to whom the announcement of the resurrection was made by Mary Magdalen, as he was the first to bear witness to this stupendous

fact before all the people. He was the first who gave directions when it was necessary to fill up the number of the Apostles, the first who confirmed the faith by a miracle, the first to convert the Jews, the first also to admit the Gentiles into the Christian Church, and it was he who presided over the Apostolic Council in Jerusalem. Of course, Jesus Christ is by personal and inherent right the High Priest and Head of the Catholic Church, but the Pope is His Viceregent and supreme visible head of the Church. Jesus Christ having transferred His glorified humanity from earth and placed it high above the whole hierarchies of heaven, even at the right hand of God, must rule His Church on earth by a substitute, and this substitute is Peter or the Pope acting as His vice-regent in His name and by His sovereign authority, just as a King rules the distant provinces of his empire by viceroys. Our Queen never visited her Indian empire, yet she rules there. She rules by a viceroy. Christ also, whom it has pleased to withdraw His visible presence from amongst us, rules His universal empire-church by a viceroy, and that is Peter and his lawful successors. There is no fact more thoroughly attested in the New Testament than this. Our Blessed Lord on a very striking occasion promised to St. Peter that He would build His Church on him, and that He would give him the keys of the kingdom of heaven as the symbol and evidence of his supreme power and jurisdiction in the Christian Church. He fulfilled these promises, as we shall see, before His ascension into heaven, by committing the whole flock, both the sheep and the lambs of the fold, to the pastoral care of Peter. In the 16th chapter of St. Matthew we find our Lord questioning His disciples and asking them "Who do men say that I am?" When informed by them of the various opinions existing on this subject, Jesus said, "Who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answering, said to him, "Blessed are

thou, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee that thou art Peter (that is a rock), and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth it shall be bound also in heaven ; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth it shall be loosed also in heaven." This is one of the most magnificent promises ever made to man, and the most far-reaching and beneficent in its influence. Peter is made the rock on which the Church of Christ is built. Peter is to the Christian Church what the foundation is to a house. Now, it is the foundation that gives strength, unity and durability to the house. If the foundation be sand-built, or if it be removed, the whole superstructure comes tumbling down in fragments ; but if it be firm and strong and unshaken as a rock, then the rains may fall and the winds blow and beat against the house, but it will defy the tempest and the floods. Peter being the foundation and rock-basis of the Church, imparts to it its enduring solidity, its order and unity, and its undying perpetuity. His authority must be the principle of its unity and strength. All the force of its laws must be derived from him, and all its authority must finally rest on him as its basis and groundwork. Who does not see that all this necessarily implies his primacy of order and jurisdiction and teaching over the universal church.

Again, Christ gives to Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven, adding that " whatsoever he will bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven, and that whatsoever he will loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven." With all nations the keys are a symbol of power and sovereign jurisdiction. When the Queen visits the cities of her kingdom, the keys are presented her in acknowledgment of her royalty and sovereignty. When a fortress surrenders to a victorious general, its keys



are presented to him to denote submission to his authority. So when Jesus promises Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven, He wishes thereby to convey the truth that He intends to impart to him supreme authority and jurisdiction over the Christian Church. This is the plain and evident meaning of the promise, or language has no meaning at all. It is the meaning attached to it by all antiquity, and by the living Church herself in all the ages of her existence. Nor is it a valid objection to say that Christ gave to all the Apostles on another occasion the power of binding and loosing, for, as Bossuet well says :

“ When power is given to several, the exercise of the power by each one is restricted by the fact that others share it with him. But power given to a single individual over all, and without exception, necessarily implies the plenitude of power. \* \* \* All the Apostles receive the same power, but not in the same degree, or with the same extent. Jesus Christ commences by the first, and in this first one He develops the whole, in order that we learn that the ecclesiastical authority which was originally constituted in the person of one man is not imparted to others, except on the condition of remaining always subordinate to the principle from which its unity is derived, and that all those who shall be charged with its exercise are found to remain inseparably united to same chair.”

Our Blessed Lord was now about to ascend into heaven to the glory of His Father ; but He will first redeem the promise of the primacy which He had made to Peter when He said He would appoint him the rock-support of His Church, and would give him the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

It was a most solemn and awful moment when Christ committed the care of His whole flock to Peter. He had shed His precious blood for the redemption of the world ; He had risen glorious and immortal from the grave, triumphant over

death and hell; He was now about to withdraw His visible presence from amongst men. But He will not leave us orphans: He will leave us a father, a vicegerent, who will rule the whole family of God in His absence, a supreme shepherd, who will feed and care and protect the sheep and the lambs of His fold. But before communicating this awful charge, before imparting this tremendous power, He exacts from Peter a confession of the most tender and ardent love. We find this solemn scene thus described in the 21st chapter of St. John's Gospel:

"When therefore they had dined, Jesus said to Simon Peter: Simon, son of John, lovest thou me more than these? He saith to him: Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith to him: Feed my lambs."

"He saith to him again: Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? He saith to him: Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee? He said to him: Feed my lambs."

"He said to him the third time: Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved, because he had said to him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said to him: Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. He said to him: Feed my sheep."—St. John, xxi. 15-17.

In these words our Redeemer evidently, and beyond all power of cavil, appointed Peter supreme and œcumenical pastor over His whole flock, with power to rule, govern and lead it, and with the right and the duty of shielding, protecting and feeding it. In other words, Christ appoints Peter supreme pastor over the Universal Church; for the words, "my lambs, my sheep," comprise not only the faithful, but even the apostles, the bishops and priests, as belonging to the flock of Christ. Such is the doctrine taught by the Fathers both of the east and west. "To Peter," writes St. Epiphanius, "was committed the flock. He leads the way admirably in the power of his own Master." St. John Chrysostom, commenting on these words of St. John, speaks yet more

strongly: "Why," he says, "passing by the rest, does He discourse with Peter concerning these things? He was the chosen one of the apostles, and the mouth of the disciples, and the head of the company. For this cause also did St. Paul take his journey to visit him in preference to the rest; and, withal, showing him he must have confidence, for his denial has been done away with. Christ places in his hands the empire over the brethren. He appointed Peter teacher, not of the Church, but of the habitable globe."

The supremacy of Peter is the conviction and faith of all Christian antiquity. These prerogatives of supremacy and infallibility conferred on Peter must in the very nature of things descend to his successors. Peter is, by appointment of our Lord, the rock on which the Church is built, and its firmness and stability depend on him. For the permanent good of the Church, and in order to preserve it safe from Satan's assaults, Peter is made its head and guardian. It follows, therefore, from these considerations, that for the security and well-being of the Church Peter's sublime prerogatives should continue as long as the Church herself will exist: that is, till the consummation of the world. Peter's authority must therefore continue in his successors. Hence, the illustrious Bousset truly says: "The prerogative conferred on Peter cannot be supposed to have ceased with him, because the foundations of a building designed to last forever cannot be subject to the ravages of time; therefore Peter will always live in his successor, and will always speak from his chair. Such is the Doctrine of the Holy Fathers, such is the declaration of the 630 Bishops assembled in the Council of Chalcedon." (Sermon on Unity.)

In order to the perfect fulfillment of the sublime duties of the primacy Christ conferred on Peter and his successors the gift of infallibility in teaching matters of faith and morals to the universal Church. This is evident from the scriptural passages which we have already cited to prove the primacy.

The gates of hell cannot prevail against the Church, because it is founded on the rock Peter ; but they could prevail if the rock could be shaken or broken by error. The commission given to Peter to feed the sheep and lambs of Christ's flock clearly implies the gift of infallibility. We cannot suppose that Christ would have committed His flock to a shepherd who would lead them astray or desert them when danger threatened. Besides, we find that our Lord positively assured Peter that his faith would not fail : " Simon, Simon," said our Lord, " behold Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat ; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not ; and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren." St. Luke, xxii., 32-33.

Our Lord foresaw that the Church would be assailed by the most bitter persecutions ; that it would have to encounter the most tremendous trials ; and in order to enable it to withstand both the one and the other, He prayed that the faith of Peter might not fail ; in other words, He prayed for the infallibility of Peter in order that he, endowed with this august prerogative, would confirm his brethren, that is, the universal Church.

Peter, therefore, ever living in the Church in the person of his successors, is its supreme and œcumenical pastor, and is endowed with the sublime gift of infallibility in his official teaching.

Such, dearly beloved brethren, are the great prerogatives conferred upon the vicar of Christ ; such is the exalted position assigned to him ; and this is why we take so profound an interest in all that concerns him, and why in all our doubts and perplexities we turn to him with the docility and confidence of children for his guidance in the road to eternal life.

And how faithfully and gloriously the Popes have discharged the duties of their high office ! Of the thirty Popes who occupied the Chair of Peter during the Roman persecu-

tions, twenty-five mounted the scaffold, and there died the martyr's death, in witness to the Christian Faith. Whenever heresy arose to assail Christian truth the Pope smote it with his anathemas. The great general Councils, which shine out like beacon lights through the centuries, were convoked and ratified by papal authority.

But the Popes not only protected the Christian Faith against the inroads of heresy, and safe-guarded the moral code of Gospel teaching, but they also promoted in the most efficient manner the cause of Christian civilization and well regulated liberty. It was they that sent their missionaries to preach the Gospel to the fierce barbarians who swarmed over southern Europe at the break up of the Roman Empire. It was they who caused them to be taught the arts of peace and all that was calculated to create and advance their civilization; and when a worse evil threatened the Christian Faith, and the liberty of European nations, when Mahometanism hung like a cloud over the greater part of Europe, threatening to break down upon it in a destructive deluge, the voice of the Popes called on the chivalry of Christendom to combine for the defence of their homes and their altars. The Popes organized the Crusades, and thus saved European civilization from destruction by the fanatical hordes of Mahomet.

The voice of the Popes was ever raised in defence of the weak against the strong, in defence of well-regulated liberty against despotic tyranny. The arts, the sciences, universities, as well as popular education, always found the Popes their most encouraging and generous patrons. It would be truly impossible to give a just estimate of the beneficent influence of the Popes on the happiness, the well-being and progress of our race. They have made a track of light across the ages they have traversed.

Our present Holy Father Leo XIII., assuredly ranks amongst the great Popes, who, by the splendour of their genius

and virtues, and by their great services to mankind, have shed an unfading lustre on the Holy See, and on the Catholic Church at large. Leo XIII. has been raised up by Divine Providence to meet the wants of the times, and to apply healing balm to the wounds that afflict modern society. From the heights of the Vatican his luminous teachings shine out over a world of doubt and darkness like beacon lights over a dark and stormy sea. In his immortal Encyclical letters he points out with a clear, unerring voice the moral evils that scourge modern society and menace its destruction, and he also shows forth the divine remedies that alone can save it from overwhelming ruin. His teachings on the condition of the laboring classes and on the rules that should regulate the relations between the employers and the employed, would, if carried into execution by the parties concerned, solve one of the most difficult and dangerous problems that disturb the mind of men and threaten the very foundations of social order and public peace. The fatal dissensions and divisions that distract the Christian world and weaken the cause of Christ and of His religion, his apostolic zeal seeks to terminate, holding out the olive branch of peace to our separated brethren and striving to realize our Blessed Lord's desire to gather in His strayed sheep into the one fold of the one true Church. But it would be impossible within the limits of this pastoral letter to dwell on the vast and signal services this great and Holy Pontiff has rendered, not alone to the Catholic Church, but to mankind at large. Now this venerable and illustrious Pontiff has been not only robbed of the temporal possessions conferred on the Apostolic See by the piety of Christian ages, but he is practically a captive in the hands of his enemies. Here is what he himself has pathetically said on the subject on a recent occasion :

"I, too, am a prisoner," he said, "and that for eighteen long years. In fact, the nineteenth has now begun since I am here in imprisonment, a noble imprisonment, if you like, but still a real imprisonment. For eighteen years I have not

been able to get a glimpse of the streets of Rome or of its holy basilicas. I have had a new apse constructed in St. John Lateran's, and yet it has been impossible for me to see it. Nor, indeed, is this all. If I wish to name bishops I have the difficulties and delays that the formality of the Placet and the exequatur imposes. Bishops in their own dioceses cannot appoint their parish priests without submitting to the visto and to the exigencies of the fiscal authorities. Add to this the perversity of an evil press, which distorts and maligns one's every act and intention. What more? On the slope of the very Vatican hill, quite close to my abode, they have raised a statue to Garibaldi, to him who called the Papacy 'the cancer of Italy.' And, indeed, if I am free at this moment to speak and to write it is simply because it would not do for them to come into my room and prevent me."

In view of this sad condition of things it becomes our most sacred duty as Catholics to contribute generously of our means towards the congruous support of our Holy Father, and to enable him to maintain the dignity and independence of his office. He is charged with the "solicitude" of all the Churches of Catholic Christendom. The funds required for the administration of the ecclesiastical affairs of the Catholic world must be very large indeed. The several congregations charged with the conduct of ecclesiastical affairs, the apostolic delegations appointed to various nations, the Nuncios at European courts, must be properly supported and maintained, the postal service to all countries of the world must be paid for. For meeting this enormous expenditure the Holy Father must depend on the contributions of the faithful, on their generous and loyal support. It is, dearest Brethren, for us to take our share in this vast and necessary work; it is time we should help our spiritual Father to carry the heavy burthen of his world-wide duties. This is for us a sacred duty and a strict obligation; we are confident that on this occasion we shall perform this duty and fulfill this obligation in a manner at once helpful and consoling to the Vicar of Christ, and creditable to the clergy and faithful



people of this Archdiocese. It is true the times are hard and the calls made upon us are many, but the cause we are asked to help on this occasion is a most sacred one; it enlists the sympathies and makes appeal to the faith and heart of the whole Catholic world, for it is the cause of right against might, of religious liberty against the tyranny that would shackle it, of the Vicar of Christ in captivity against the Government that has robbed and imprisoned him; it is, in a word, the cause of Jesus Christ against the world that has been His enemy from the beginning. Let then our offerings be worthy of this sacred cause and worthy of our faith and love. And if in the past we have been somewhat tardy in our duty in this respect, let our contributions now make full amends by their hearty and generous character for any apparent negligence.

Wherefore, having invoked the Holy name of God, We ordain as follows:—

1. A collection shall be taken up in every Church and Chapel of this Archdiocese, as an offering of our faith and love to our Holy Father, on some Sunday in October next, the object of the collection having been previously and fully explained to the people by their pastor.

2. The proceeds shall be sent with as little delay as possible to the Chancellor of the Archdiocese.

3. The names of the donors shall be taken down and sent to us to be kept in the archives as an honorable record of the loyalty and generosity of our faithful people.

4. This pastoral shall be read in all the churches and chapels of the Archdiocese on the first Sunday after its reception.



May the peace and blessing of the omnipotent God,  
the Father, Son and Holy Ghost descend upon you, and abide  
with you for ever, dearly beloved Brethren.

Given at St. Michael's Palace, Toronto, on the 21st day  
of September—Feast of St. Matthew the Apostle—in the  
year of our Lord, 1896.

+ John Walsh  
Archbishop of Toronto

By order of His Grace the Archbishop.  
JAMES WALSH, *Secretary.*



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